

SPARK

PRINTWEAR

08/4889559

14530 - 118 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5L 2M8
info@sparkprintwear.com

The official
the voice!
Printers!

Call Spark
for your
t-shirts,
graphics,
hoodies,
embroidery,
hats, crests,
sweat pants,
banners,
and more!

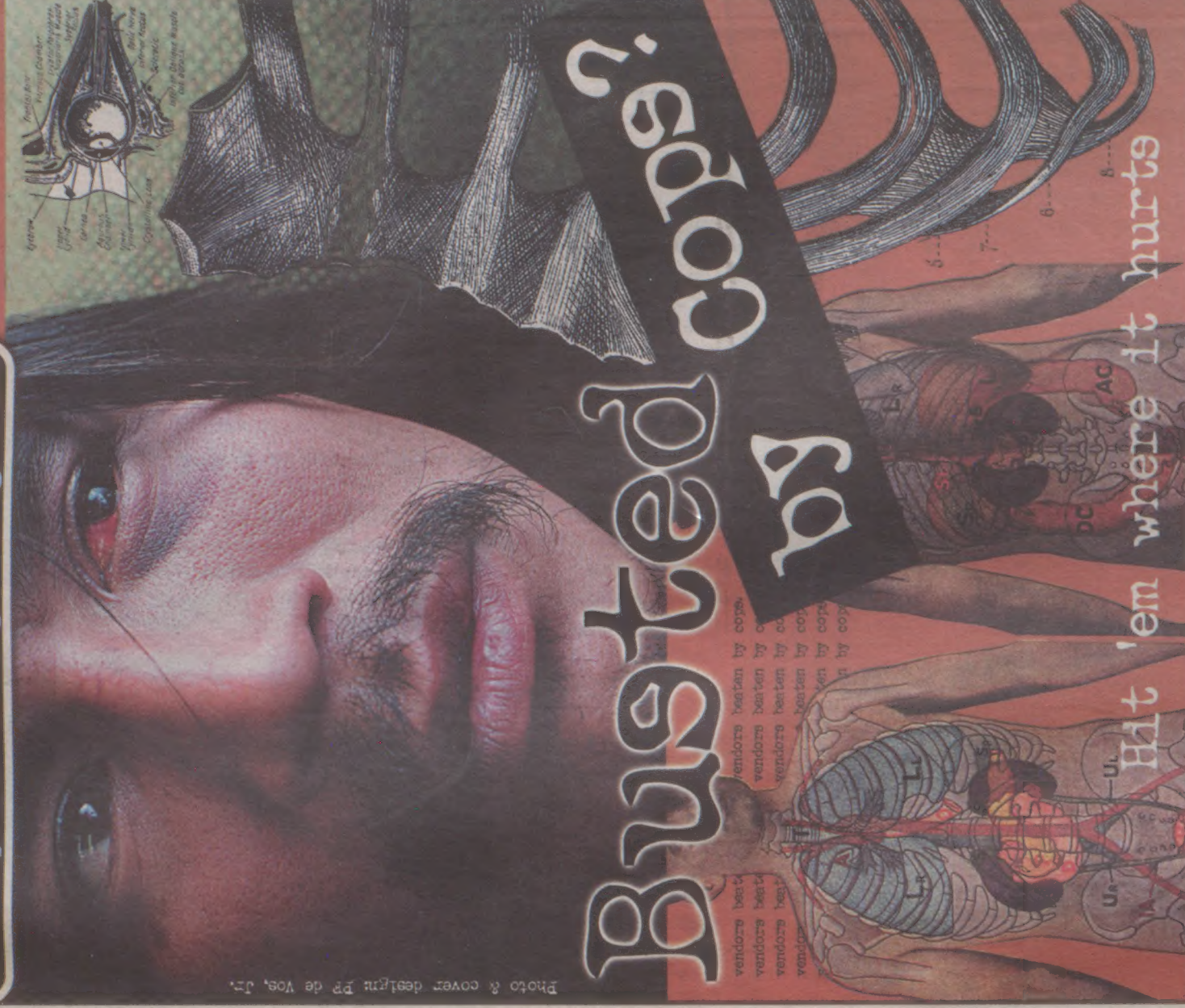


Sold by donation - Buy from badged vendors only

VOICE

THE SPARE CHANGE MAGAZINE

SEPT 2000
VOL. 7 NO. 9



Your vendor pays up to 50c per copy

PUBLISHER:
Bissell Centre, Edmonton

MANAGING EDITOR
Michael Walters

COMMUNITY EDITOR
Natasha Laurence

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
Pieter de Vos, Jr.

DISTRIBUTION
Travis Branter

PROOF READER(S)
Kara Dublenko

EDITORIAL OFFICES & EDMONTON DISTRIBUTION:

Bissell Centre, 10527-96 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 2H6
Phone: 428-4001
Toll Free: 1-888-428-4001
Fax: 497-7077

Email:
ourvoice@bissellcentre.org

OUR VOICE is published to provide an income opportunity for economically marginalized people in our society while communicating about their issues to the public.

OUR VOICE is a NON-PROFIT program that survives on vendors, advertising contributions and Tax Deductible Donations.

If you have any concerns about vendor behavior call our distribution team at:
#423-2285 ext. 139

ADVERTISING

For advertising rates and related information, please contact
Moe at CEDAR PUBLISHING
Phone: 454-3349

September 2000
Vol. 7 No. 9

Our Voice invites your contributions and input.

Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, unless otherwise indicated.

Our Voice welcomes written submissions (particularly those on PC or Mac compatible diskettes), cartoons, photographs or artwork.

Our Voice cannot accept responsibility for any submission. No part of this newspaper may be reproduced in any form without written permission from Our Voice.

Opinions expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of Our Voice, the editors or publishers.

Our Voice is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA).

Back to School Budget Blues

Fall is in the air, and as the wind turns cold, mailboxes all over the city fill with flyers proclaiming back to school sales. Everything can be found on sale, but for the low-income parent reduced prices are not enough. The list of needs is too long and if you are blessed with more than one child, everything must be multiplied accordingly.

"It seems endless," explains a young mother of two, "Paper, pencils, binders, glue, scissors, felt markers, indoor shoes AND outdoor shoes. My daughter needs a new backpack and she desperately wants a pair of those bell bottom jeans to wear the first day. I don't know if I can afford them."

I am with a group of women talking over coffee and the frustration is apparent.

"I always dread this time of year," another woman, with four children, says, "Our budget is tight at normal times, but back to school and Christmas...we recover from one just in time for the other. I told my children I would try, but I can't guarantee they will get everything they need right away. Last year it was the beginning of November before I could afford the special calculator my son needed. There was nothing I could do about it."

She laughs but there is an edge to her laughter.

"I know what you mean. My daughter's teacher kept sending home notes last year, telling me she needed this and she needed that. I pretended I didn't get the notes, because I couldn't bear to tell the teacher I

couldn't afford it. I felt like such a failure as a parent."

There is a growing sense of camaraderie in the group, with the acceptance of shared secrets.

"I was hiding from my kids homeroom teachers at the Christmas concert last year because I hadn't been able to pay their school fees. It was so humiliating. Sometimes I think the shame is worse than not having the money. I hate the feeling that I can't look people in the eye. I hate disappointing my kids, but at least they're there and they're learning. That's the important thing, right?"

Natasha Laurence

On the sacredness of Images: An Apology...

In last month's issue of Our Voice (August 2000) we ran a gritty opinion piece on the topic of residential schooling. Entitled "Blood Money," the commentary raised the culpability of religious organizations in this modern day tragedy. To illustrate the article, we elected to run an image of a man drinking beneath a church sign. The image was chosen for its editorial value.

The man in question is Russell Bone, an individual who we've had the privilege of photographing over the past few years. Unfortunately, Russell was offended that we ran his picture with the adjacent article. The following is his response to the publication of the image.

"I felt insulted that my picture was used with the article. My sister saw it and said, 'That's not you.' Of course, I'm an alcoholic, but I respect churches. I respect my family. That's my picture, but it's not my story. I love my grandfather and my uncle. I do respect the residential schools. I had a roof over my head. OK they were mean, but I didn't have to live on the reserve. They took me away from some of the negative things there. I have my own spirituality and I respect other people's spirituality."

We acknowledge Russell's concerns. They are a good reminder of the sacredness of images and the responsibility we carry when we publish them.

OV Staff



SPECIAL FEATURES:

Page 3
It may not be a castle

Page 6
Enviro-classroom

Page 8 (Cover Story)
Busted by Cops?

Page 9
The History of the Games

Page 10 & 11
NASNA Wrap-up

REGULAR FEATURES:

Page 4
Letters to the Editor

Page 5
Editorial Opinions

Page 12
The Poetry of Patches

Page 15
Vendor of the Month

Sept Highlights

It may not be a castle...

It may not be a castle but it's better than the street. It's just a cheap hotel room with a worn rug, a sink, a battered dresser, a small table and a double bed, but this room and others like it are home to a number of low-income people. For them, living in a hotel room has the advantage of availability – no damage deposit is required, and you don't need references. Besides, having a room provides a much-needed address for people collecting social assistance because no address means no cheque.

In the inner city, the International hotel was condemned and is scheduled for demolition, but the York and the Royal hotels are still providing necessary lodging for those who have difficulty finding housing. Many have taken up permanent residence in the hotels.

"I lived in Inner City Housing before moving to the York Hotel eight months ago," said Donna, a middle aged woman who has severe arthritis and walks with a cane. "I had to move because I was evicted when I lost my money gambling."

Donna said she likes living in the hotel because it's closer to the bar and she feels safe.

"A lot of people are afraid of the York," she said. "But I've got a lot of friends there and they look out for me. I like it better than Inner City Housing where I didn't know anyone in the apartment."



Donna is on medical welfare. A voucher for \$275 goes straight to the hotel, and she receives \$312 by cheque each month. She earns additional spending money picking bottles, using a shopping cart as a walker, making two to 15 dollars a day. Sometimes, however, when she's out bottle picking, people just give her money. One day she was really touched when a young man gave her \$15 saying "go buy yourself something to eat."

Donna is not allowed to cook in her room due to health regulations, so she eats out at the café when she has money and at the Bissell Centre, The Mustard Seed and other drop-ins when she doesn't have money.

The desk clerk at the York Hotel, who does not want to be named, said about half of their forty rooms are rented out to people collecting social assistance on a monthly basis. Employees who need a place to stay until they can afford other accommodations rent some of the other rooms. When asked about rumours that the hotel may be condemned like the International, she said they are unsubstantiated.

"The Health Board came in and we've complied with everything so far. We had a cockroach problem, but they've come out with some good stuff now, that new gel, and the roaches are gone."

The hotel provides sheets and towels on a weekly basis. A security door keeps people from wandering in off the street. All visitors have to be buzzed in at the desk. People are allowed to drink and smoke in their rooms, and can have overnight guests if they pay an additional \$10 per person per night.

The clerk said she believes lack of money to pay damage deposits is a major reason why people choose to live at the hotel rather than renting suites. "The social services should lend out money to pay for damage deposits, and have the money returned to them when the person moves," she said.

Sometimes when a person is in real need, and she knows them, the desk clerk will rent a room on credit.

"One older woman was stuck with nowhere to go. She was walking the streets in winter," she said. "I had her here for four months until her welfare came through. I didn't charge her for all of that time."

Another tenant was temporarily evicted when he refused to see a doctor.



"His face was all burned, and he wouldn't go to the hospital," the desk clerk said, "I told him he was evicted so that he would have to go for help, and let him back in again after he got out of the Royal Alex."

Six blocks south of the York Hotel is the Royal. Here, too, over half of the rooms are rented out monthly to people on low incomes or collecting supports for Independence (welfare). Rooms cost \$260

a month and have the advantage of a telephone. There is no security door, but a sign near the staircase reads, "No visitors after 11. All visitors must stop at the front desk. Only two visitors at one time."

Eric Moyan has lived in the Royal Hotel for two years. He's not on welfare, but has a seasonal job, and collects Employment Insurance during the summer. For him, the Royal Hotel is home.

"It's a lot better than other inner city hotels," he said. "I've lived in the York, and the Cecil. The rooms at the York are smaller, and the Cecil is too expensive."

No cooking is allowed in the rooms, so his hot plate has to be kept out of sight, and he uses a shared refrigerator in the office on the main floor.

But Moyan is concerned because the Royal Hotel is under new management as of August, and the rooms are to be renovated one floor at a time.


"After the renovations, the rent might be too high," he said. And higher rents mean that he may have to move out.

Kenny Gambler and Larry Nyland are homeless since they were evicted from their apartment. With no address or place to live, they've been sleeping outside along the riverbank or at the Spady Centre, a shelter for people under the influence of drugs or alcohol. They pick bottles for spending money and eat at the different drop-ins.

"We had a tent," explained Gambler, "We'd put it up at night and hide it in the bushes during the day, but someone found it and stole it."

They are hoping to get hotel rooms so they can collect Supports for Independence (welfare) before the weather turns cold.

Linda Dumont



YARD WORK

SPRING CLEANING

ODD JOBS

*Pay the worker,
Not the broker*

No placement, administration, or broker fees.
Workers are available to work 24 hrs a day.
7 days a week

(Appointments made within work hrs.)

AVERAGE HOURLY RATE - \$7.00

**Bissell Centre's
Casual Labour Office**
424-4385

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 7am-2pm
Frid 7am-noon

No fee job placement service

CALL 424-4385

Operated on a non-profit basis

*Fill up your closet...
...without emptying your wallet!*

- clothing
- fashion
- teen trends
- new & used



- housewares
- furniture
- antiques
- jewellery

8818-118 Avenue

9-9 Monday-Friday

9-6 Saturday

12-5 Sunday

We've got the best quality at the best prices. NO G.S.T.!

We are 100% non-profit and locally owned

Southside Store 9232 34 Ave

icpm
INNER CITY * ASTORAL MINISTRY

Rev. Faith Brace

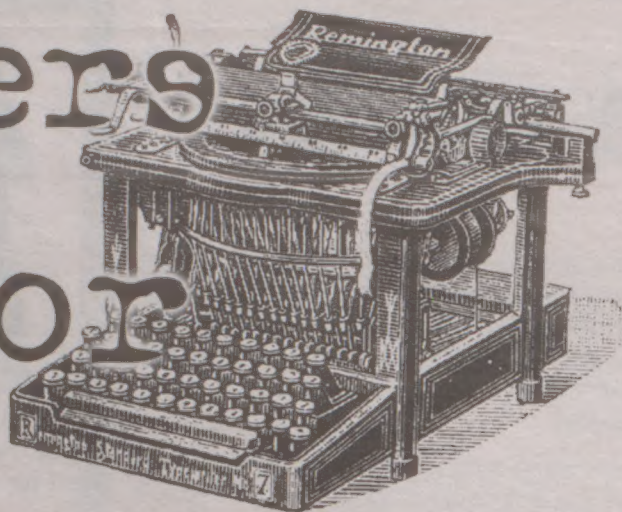
Office located at:

10628 - 96 Street

Mailing Address:
Box 674, Main Post Office
Edmonton, AB T5J 2K8

Telephone (780) 424-7652
Fax (780) 431-1578
email: fbrace@telusplanet.net

Letters to the Editor



Where are the Positives in Poverty

For a while I have been thinking about writing you about Our Voice, which I purchase as often as I am able to when I am downtown. I am glad there is a newspaper that doesn't follow mainstream thought, and that has its main goal to help people economically. I myself have had to receive Social Assistance a few times, so I hope that I am not completely ignorant when it comes to your issues.

I agree with many of the articles that appear in your newspaper, especially in regards to the government. However, there seems to be a lack of positive stories, you know - successes of people that have been able to lift themselves out of poverty. You're probably thinking, "oh great, an ignorant guy who thinks there has to be a happy ending to every story", but I think it would be an encouragement to all to know that there are actually people who are able to break the chain. Of course we need to be reminded that there still is a problem!

I also think sometimes we are too critical of our government and country. We have to remember that these people are human too, and of course we will never have

a perfect system. I think that in the majority of cases, people who work for Social Services and Employment Insurance do it because they want to make a difference. Why else would they put up with people insulting them, and go to work every day just to see the misery of society? Sometimes I think we need to give these people a pat on the back. Who knows, they might even do a better job! I guess I just want to remind people that we do live in one of the best countries in the world, and that at least there is help for people. In so many other countries if you don't have family to help you, you might as well forget about surviving.

Just so you know, I don't work for the government, nor have I ever worked for the government. I just feel sometimes we need to be reminded that as bad as things are, they could be a hell of a lot worse south of the border!!

Once again, I want to congratulate you on your newspaper, and hope now and then we can congratulate the people in the government that do have our best interests at heart

Thanks!
R. Gillis

Labelling Joe a Human

Compliments and congratulations to Linda Dumont for her sensitive and touching profile of Joe Bates ("A Vendor For Life", OV June 2000). To any casual observer, and even perhaps to many who are acquainted with the inner city, Joe's life might have been described with a more sardonic twist. Alcoholic and drug abuser, car thief, absentee father, fugitive from the law-- one almost expects that kind of labelling, whether it comes with criticism for his bad choices or apologetics for his being some kind of victim.

Dumont does neither. Without romanticizing or cloying, she transmits a deep respect and appreciation for a man who had a tough life. Through her we see a man with pride and dignity, a man with a big heart; a life of great value, one that made a difference, one that will be missed.

Joe was not the sort of person that counts for much, the way our society does the counting. For many, he would just be lumped together with many other individuals that share the shallow labels. Thank-you for shining such a beautiful light on the life of that one human being.

Larry Derkach
Edmonton

Letters to the Editor can be mailed to:

10527-97 Street,
Edmonton, AB
T5H 2H6
Email: ourvoice@dissealcentre.org
Fax: (780) 497-7077

In her own words...



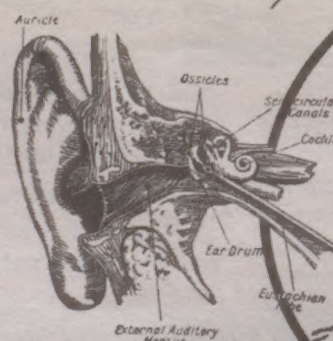
I went to the police station 'cause someone was trying to hurt me or something like that.... that's why I went to the police station and they told me to get out. If I didn't get out I'd get arrested. I was in there trying to protect myself, cause I know officers help people, right?

Now, when I went to the police station, it's like, "Get out of my police station!" This is at nighttime, but I don't drink when I'm working. I don't believe in that, eh? I know some poor people living on the street, the police officers don't care. I wish we could do something about that right now. Treat people properly. They're like, "Go to work, you little scum," or something like that. 'Cause I'm on AISH. I'm living in an apartment. It's hard for me to live in there, help myself. I'll tell you something, I smash walls because I still have a hard time. I don't mean to. It's hard for me. I can't find something, I

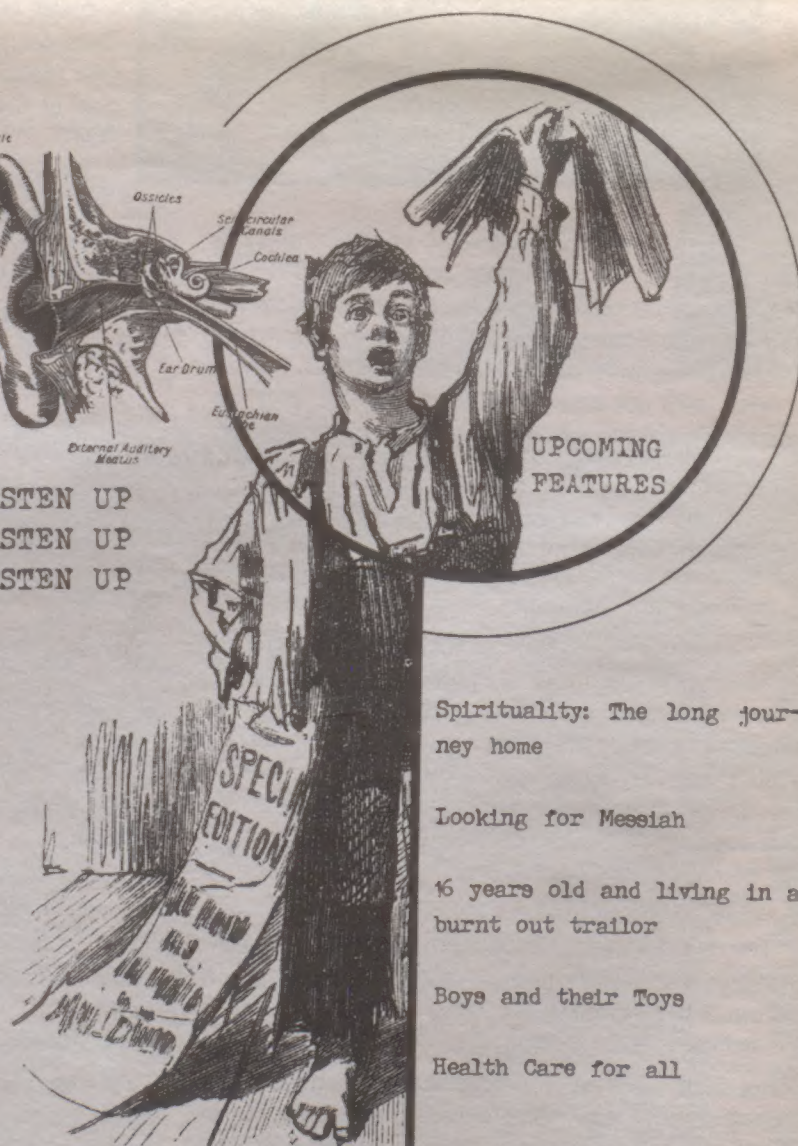
get upset. Last night I broke my clock, I had a hard time with that.

I can't stand being by myself no more. It's hard. When a person lives in an apartment, I don't think the landlord should kick people out with disabilities. It's too hard to find another place. All the other tenants complain about me. Too much noise. I yell cause I can't find my stuff. It's hard for me. IT'S HARD!!! Seems like it's so hard to deal with everything; maybe it's the right thing to go into a group home. But I'm getting married and stuff. I have to do something about my life. I just want someone to just love me. I need someone to say, "Ok, honey, I'm here for you, sweetheart." I want someone to be my mama, you know. I'm not trying to get attention. I just want someone to love me. Two or three years ago, I'm feeling OK; I'm kind of messed up now. I'm hurting myself. Pretty soon I'll be on the streets, if I don't smarten up here.

Michelle Semple



LISTEN UP
LISTEN UP
LISTEN UP



Spirituality: The long journey home

Looking for Messiah

16 years old and living in a burnt out trailer

Boys and their Toys

Health Care for all

JUSTICE FOR ALL?

If I had a dollar for every time I've heard someone in the inner city tell me about being assaulted by the police, I would quit my job and move to Mexico, where you know which side the police are on: *their own*. Unfortunately, the people with the stories are usually the ones with the fewest financial resources, so I must resign myself to working, and listening to the stories for free. But the reality they describe is deeply troubling for several reasons.

First of all, I hate bullies. Any situation where the fight is unfair and the powerful take advantage of the weak raises the hairs on the back of my neck. The police have power, given to them by society for its own protection, but it sickens me when this power is used in an abusive way.

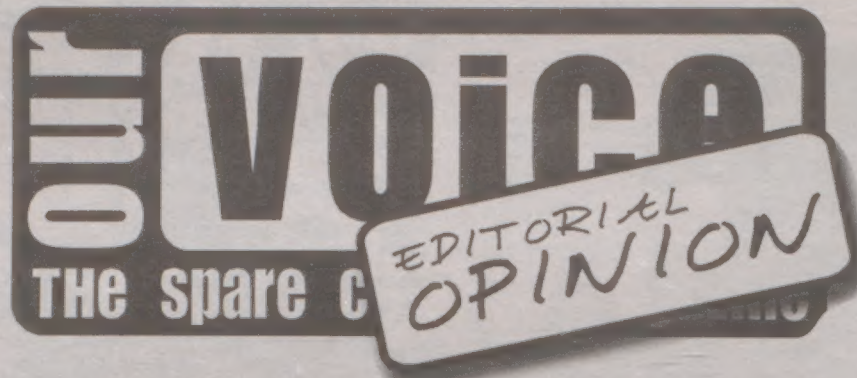
Secondly, when the police take the law into their own hands, they are corrupting the system they were sworn to uphold. They are officers of the law acting outside the law. What protection do we have against them? There is a definite problem when the abuse and harassment of street people is considered justifiable. In these cases what makes police officers any different from common street thugs - the snappy haircuts? the uniforms? the badges? the guns? the fact we're paying them to do things that anyone else would be arrested for?

Thirdly, it is my experience that the abuses most often

happen to people who are already suffering from an endless stream of abuse, from parents, caregivers, the system and each other. They happen to people so used to abuse that they do not file complaints, they do not advocate on their own behalf, they take it and go on. But by it they are confirmed in their mistrust of authority and further entrenched in a sub-culture underlined by despair and violence. It could be argued that the actions of the police in these cases, while appearing "protective" actually make our city a more dangerous place to live. It's hard to convince someone to live within the law when the law has always been unlawful to him.

The fourth and most disturbing reason I am troubled by stories of police brutality is the fear I have that the police are actually society's attitudes in uniform. In my darkest nights I see my fellow citizens willing to hand over responsibility for street poverty and addictions to those willing to do the dirty work of keeping it out of their sight. I see a society willing to turn away and assume that the assaulted deserve the assaults, rather than face the task of creating a society where there is actually justice for all.

Natasha Laurence, Community Editor



I Think therefore



Spitting out the ejaculate

Picture a man, stooped over, with his eyes aimed listlessly at the pavement that passes methodically beneath worn out fourth hand shoes.

In his mind he mulls over a desire more prevalent than the hot sun that bakes his thick black hair. It's a desire to be worthy of his feelings. It's a desire to be recognized for the pain that has settled like mortar into the pits of his eyes. It's a desire to be set free.

In the news today we often hear of the backlash that aboriginal people have set in motion against churches and atonement homes. The claims are heavy and rapid. The sheer numbers of people raging for retribution grows daily and each additional cry further legitimizes the collective struggle. Aboriginal people in Canada, behind all the political rhetoric and mainstream denial of their plights are hurting and within the collective there are people with broken souls dragging along side their weary bodies.

People have talked of the physical intrusion, of the mental breakdown, and of being left with little more than injured bodies and frightened minds with which to make a life.

One such fellow arrived at our door some months ago. His story was one that echoed many before him, but this person seemed more determined to do something about it. As true as it is that many aboriginal people have come forth to look for justice, many more have simply faded away into the soiled hands of addictions and violence. Moses was rare.

He had come from Regina, where he had begun the process of finding his justice. A lawyer there indicated he may take his case and opened a file on him.

Moses was taken from his parents at the age of 7 and placed in a home for boys. There he says he was beaten, belittled and enslaved until the age of 14 when he was able to run away. After years of suicide attempts and years of poverty he decided he needed to start living. But before that could happen he needed to know his feelings were real beyond his own heart. He needed, as we all do when we feel we've been wronged, to be validated.

Moses came to Edmonton because he felt the lawyer in Regina wasn't acting on his case. He demanded that his story be told and that we help him. He needed his file faxed up from the lawyer in Regina so he could begin work here. We called his lawyer in Regina and asked for the file to be faxed. They told us they would mail it. We waited. Every day Moses came into the office to see if his file had arrived and each day it hadn't. Two weeks passed so we called again. We were never able to speak to the lawyer Moses had originally talked to. He was in an eternal meeting. His receptionist apologized and promised that the file would be sent out that day.

Moses continued to come every day to check on his file and still it did not come. We began to call every day and every day they offered a new excuse and a new promise. Moses became increasingly irritable and again he became suicidal. Some of the other people around the

office suggested he forget about it and just move on, but it held him like a spider holds a fly. He was stuck and it was a steep fall if he let himself loose from his purpose. We continued to call. Then Moses didn't show up for a couple of days.

We got a call from him shortly after. He had decided to walk to Regina to get his file himself. He had grown very frustrated and could think of nothing else to do other than wake up, put on his shoes and head out onto the highway. He called, of course, to see if his file had arrived. It was very hot and he was very tired. He was hoping the file had arrived so he could turn around and come back to Edmonton.

I found this to be so incredible. It demonstrated how disconnected so much of our world is. I bet we phoned that lawyer in Regina thirty times with no response. He didn't care. Yet there was Moses, trudging through the hot July sun. His sick and weakened body held together by dirty clothes being slowly cooked while thinking about this file, this lawyer and why no one will acknowledge that his claim is worthy, that his feelings are real. It was all that existed in his mind. It was the doorway to the rest of his life. Moses wants justice and lawyers are supposed to help toward justice. This lawyer probably never once thought of Moses, perhaps only annoyed when his secretary told him we had called again.

Moses continues to fight for validation. He continues to look for the understanding that will allow him to heal. He, unlike so many others, doesn't want to get lost in the bottle to forget the pain he feels. His story has shown me truly why so many people do get lost in the bottle to forget their pain. How many of us would choose drunken disillusion over walking to Regina in 30 degree weather because we feel that is our only choice?

One of Moses' friends describes his story as finally spitting out the ejaculate of the system that refused him and tried to change him. Now he searches for a metaphor even more powerful. He searches for the voice that will tell him, we are sorry for what we did to you. You were wronged, and for this we absorb your shame and now you are free.

Michael Walters, Managing Editor

DE PREMIERS WANT
TO SEE ME?
TELL DEM DAT I'M PLAYING
GOLF TODAY!



HEALTH CARE SUMMIT?



Enviro-classroom

What does the playground where your child attends school look like? Is it, like the vast majority of city schools, hard grey pavement or browning grass, maybe painted with a few lines to draw a soccer field? Is the ground littered with discarded lunch wrappings that collect along the chain link fence when the wind blows? Are there deep grooves in the dirt that surround the few pieces of scratched-up jungle gym equipment? Perhaps there are a few trees, clustered in a far corner or scattered throughout the schoolyard.

Is this the type of playground where a child can learn about the environment? Karin Adshead, creator of Earth Challenge, would argue "no." She believes that for children to learn and care about the world's environment, they must be able to relate to their own local environment in an interactive and constructive way.

The Earth Challenge program is just one of many environmental education programs that are being taught in today's classroom.

The modern environmental education movement has its roots in the 1960's. Rachel Carson's classic book, *Silent Spring*, which detailed how toxic chemicals remain in the environment, brought environmental issues into mainstream public thought. Interest in the environment fluctuated for the next few decades and in 1992, the United Nations organized the Earth Summit in Rio to discuss the state of the world's environment.

One of the papers to come out of that conference, Agenda 21, was a global action plan to deal with environmental crises. The participants agreed that a key element of protecting the environment was education.

What were not settled at this conference were the underlying reasons for environmental crises. This has resulted in a wide variety of viewpoints that come through in environmental education.

One school of thought places monetary value on the different parts of the environment. This philosophy is based on seeing the environment as a set of tools for peoples' use. Preservation of the environment is generally financially motivated. One of the key buzzwords of this group is "sustainable development."

The second school of thought is more eco-centric. People rooted in this philosophy see the environment itself as having inherent value. They believe that all the living and non-living components that make up the envi-

ronment are valuable simply because they exist.

While both groups may agree that the environment needs to be preserved, it is difficult for these two philosophies to find common ground.

The philosophy of sustainable development tends to bill its education programs as promoting a "balanced" view of the environment. FEESA (Friends of Environmental Education Society of Alberta) calls the education it delivers "bias-balanced," stating: "We present, explore and examine the environment/economy relationship as it exists in Alberta." However, over one quarter of the FEESA's board of directors are industry representatives (oil, energy and forestry) and there are no representatives from any wildlife, ecological or preservation societies.

Proponents of the sustainable development approach of environmental education often dismiss and criticize the eco-centric approach. Terms like "bias-balanced" put forth the idea that all other approaches are unbalanced. The eco-centric approach to education would disagree that sustainable development education is "bias-free," as it is based on the social and economic systems of consumption.

While both groups use science as a basis for their arguments, each side questions the integrity of the other viewpoint. Global warming is a case in point. Sustainable development often contends that there is no conclusive scientific

proof that global warming is occurring.

A proponent of sustainable development, the Fraser Institute recently released a book called *Facts, Not Fear: Teaching Children About the Environment*. They state that the eco-centric point of view uses fear to educate children. "When teaching about the environment, many textbooks and children's books include vague, unsupported statements of doom. They misinform children about facts and examine only one view of complicated environmental topics. In some cases, children are even urged to become activists," said Laura Jones, the Fraser Institute's director of environmental studies.

Despite charges such as this, Karin Adshead, whose Earth Challenge project favours an eco-centric approach states: "It is not effective for children to be scared, to terrify children into not being able to act. The important things are democracy, knowledge and acting in one's own backyard." Eco-centric science shows there is a great deal of convincing scientific evidence to indicate global warming is occurring and it is better to act now than later.

Acting locally and proactively is one of the central tenants of eco-centric environmental education. In the Earth Challenge project, Kindergarten and grade one children will design and plant a vegetable and flower garden using heritage seeds. In the middle elementary school years, the students will study local birds and landscape the school grounds to encourage the nesting of different species. The later grades focus on the whole ecosystem and biodiversity.

Because the schoolyard will be designed and constructed in large part by the children, Karin Adshead believes they will feel a sense of pride and ownership and take good care of the area. She also believes that the lessons they learn in their elementary years will stay with them and these children will continue on to take good care of their local communities and the earth as a whole.

Rebecca Lippiatt-Long

Small plates, large plates...

A dish for every appetite...
The Manor Cafe -
consistently rated as one
of Edmonton's best
eating establishments.



Manor Cafe

10109-125 Street
Phone 482-7577

FREE CUSTOMER PARKING

Dirty rotten drop-shot

One of my favorite Peanuts cartoons shows Snoopy, with a wrathful expression and a tennis racket declaiming "He who lives by the dirty rotten drop shot shall perish by the dirty rotten drop shot!"

OUR VOICE vendors used to sell outside the doorway of the Strathcona Garden Market IGA on 104th Street in Old Strathcona. In June of this year we were asked to discontinue selling at this location. Victor Jones, Kenny Fong and myself were the vendors keeping a roof over our heads, a bus pass in a pocket and edibles in the tummy from the proceeds of sales at this venue. See Magazine has written an article based on interviews with Mike Walters, Editor of OUR VOICE, Michael Bateman owner of IGA, the store manager and the mall manager. See Magazine has also had a reporter interview Victor and myself, and last we heard a reporter from the Edmonton Journal has also been asking questions about this whole business. Regular customers of Victor, Kenny and myself have also had things to say to us, not at all kindly about IGA. It has become time for those actually most impacted by this situation to speak to the issue.

My experiences in selling OUR VOICE over the last two years have demonstrated that the typical OUR VOICE reader is likely to be better educated, more intelligent, more politically sophisticated and possess a more evolved social conscience than that of the average Edmontonian. Further, there are a higher percentage of individuals with this constellation of characteristics, perhaps because of the proximity of the U of A, living in the Strathcona area than in other areas of Edmonton. These customers understand that the honeymoon of tasty loss leaders offered by

such chain stores as Save On Foods, which has opened a huge new store a block south of IGA, lasts only as long as there is effective competition in the neighborhood. When that competition is gone, the prices go up, for good, to finance the destruction of some other neighborhood's indigenous grocery business. It is surprising that Mike Bateman is willing to commit political suicide alienating these hardcore individual enterprise supporters, who are willing to keep shopping at a store with less selection, higher prices and a rather shabby appearance, in order to support an independent business rather than a chain. These are also the people who are willing to overlook a vendor's shabby appearance to read OUR VOICE.

See Magazine reported that "friends of OUR VOICE" are calling for a boycott of this IGA because of the vendors' banishment. As a grocery shopper I feel asking for a boycott is a bad thing. It is something that is easy to start, but difficult to end and I believe, like Snoopy that "those who live by the dirty rotten drop shot shall perish by the dirty rotten drop shot."

Trade used to be a positive and healthy way for individuals and groups to exchange goods and services surplus to their own needs for goods and services other individuals or groups might possess surplus to their needs, in a transaction that was beneficial to all parties. Today trade has become a substitute for war, with winners exploiting losers for the benefit of only one side of the transaction. When Save On Foods drives IGA out of business, customers as well as IGA employees and the Bateman enterprise will all be the losers. Vendors also will have to pay the higher prices for groceries along with everyone else.

This is just the way business is done these days. War is hell. Everybody is at risk.

What has come out of all this that has been positive for us vendors, has been hearing from so many of our customers that they do not approve of the effects of the business as war ethos. At OUR VOICE, we do not approve of business as war either, too many of us are already walking wounded from mercantile warfare. To our loyal customers, thank you for your expressions of solidarity and concern. To SEE Magazine, thank you for bringing this issue to a larger public. To everybody, please do not return evil for evil. There are better ways to do things, and if we are to survive as a society we need to find ways of doing things that benefit all parties in a transaction.

To Mr. Bateman, a final thought to ponder: Wall Mart pays people to greet customers and welcome them to their store. They obviously consider making people feel a little happier before they peruse the goods the store offers for sale has a beneficial effect at the check out, or they certainly would not be paying those wages. Your business has enjoyed the free services of courteous, personable, friendly greeters courtesy of OUR VOICE for the better part of a year. Just this afternoon one of my customers told me that going grocery shopping is not the same for her anymore. The vendor who isn't there has left a hole she can feel. A little human kindness goes a long way, and for all the people who felt threatened by vendors, I can assure you, there were ten who enjoyed a regular smile or a chat. We vendors miss them too.

Theresa McBryan

So high I thought I'd die

Hi, I'm 25 years old, and before I go on, I'd like to tell you I'm not here to preach at you. Whether or not you use or abuse drugs and alcohol is your choice, ultimately. I'd just like to tell you a bit about my life, and the consequences of substance abuse for me. I began using marijuana when I was about 17. First, it was sporadic use. Then it became more frequent. I also was drinking most weekends. I

Submitted through the Old Strathcona Youth Co-op

tried LSD one night, along with smoking weed, and drinking. I had an awesome trip. I felt I was in heaven, next to God. The next morning, I woke up and was totally burned out, with rotgut. It tried LSD about 4 or 5 times after this, along with lots of weed and booze. I had one bad, hellish trip. I felt like millions of needles were piercing my mind. It was truly hell on earth. This was between the ages of 17 and 19. I was smoking weed and drinking a lot. Then I did LSD again, with dope and booze. I caught the train from downtown, and started hallucinating on the way home. When I got there my family had just got back from holidays. My Mom's hair was shimmering like a wheat field, and she was inside the house. I said, "I need help. This led me to being diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, with drug psychosis and an anxiety disorder. I was sent to the Claresholm Care Centre, in the town of Claresholm, where I spent two and a half years of my life.. Ten months in the Care Centre and about a year and a half in the community. I had many struggles relating to my mental illness, which I believe was totally drug related in sever-

ity. I was still drinking and doing drugs, and now I was on medication for my illness. Here's some of the things that happened there.

An overdose that could have been fatal. Suicidal thoughts about 100 times. Ongoing anxiety for most of the day 3 or 4 times a week. Trashing a music room in a rage. Writing in my own blood on the quiet rooms wall, "I hate this dying inside." Another rage or two. Then I moved to Lethbridge's "Sasha's House." I was there for a year and a half. This was one of the tough times of my life. I had bad anxiety a lot, it was a negative hellish space to be. I've had agony so complete, I just wanted to die about 15 to 20 times.

Here is an account of my drug abuse:

smoking weed a few hundred times LSD, 6 or 7 times/ mushrooms once/ poppers 4 or 5 times/ laced marijuana 15 - 20 times/ sniffing solvents 6 or 7 times/ drunk and stoned about 45 times/ so high, I thought I'd die 9 or ten times/ hours of anxiety probably a thousand or more/ suicide attempts 3 (2 o.d.'s - 1 slashing arms) /2 or 3 years of anger/ 2 or 3 nervous breakdowns/ 2 bad trips /very psychotic thoughts over 100 times (Thoughts of murder, self harm, abusing others)

Years spent clean off or drugs 1 year and a couple of months.

I'd just like you to remember, I suffered these consequences largely due to drug and alcohol abuse. Each person is different. I just hope none of you go through what I did. Like me, you may not see the consequences until it is too late.

Check out Our voice & Songs of the Street at



ALBERTA
BOOK FAIR
SOCIETY

Presents...

THE WORD IS OUT!
Book Fair

Friday, Sept. 15th, 7 to 9:30 PM
Opening Night, Edmonton Public Library

Saturday, Sept. 16th, 10 AM to 5 PM
Fringe Theatre Arts Barns, Old Strathcona

Vendors claim police brutality

Ed Mahar (top)

"Tuesday, August 15, I was sitting in Jasper Pizza, ordering lasagna. Constable Rick Abbot and his partner, Constable Grant Jongejan walked by the window. They motioned for me to come outside. I shook my head no. They came in and got me. They asked me what I was doing on Jasper. They said, 'You know you're not supposed to be down here. We warned you once before.' I said, 'What's your guys' problem? I just ordered something to eat.' They said, 'We don't give a shit.'"

They took me two doors down to a little office they have there. When we went in the front door, they said, 'Go round the wall where no one can see what's going on.' Then Jongejan said, (Abbott was on the phone). 'Get on your knees, put your head against the wall and don't look.' I told him I had busted ribs and a punctured lung. I said, 'Just leave me alone. What are you guys bugging me for?' 'Fuck you,' he said. 'You know what we're doing.' I don't know what he hit me with, his baton, I think, it was a steel rod.' He hit me three times across the back. Then he said, 'How does that feel?' Abbott was still on the phone, talking and laughing, so Jongejan said, 'I think we're done with him now. Go get your Lasagna, you piece of shit.' He also told me if he saw me on Jasper Avenue again, he would break both my legs."

In their own words...

Peter Van Eck (bottom)

"I was walking down Jasper on the other side of the Mayfair. Abbott came up behind me. He put his gun to the back of my head. He said, 'Get down on your knees and put your hands behind your back.' He hit me hard once on the back of my head. I blacked out. When I woke up I was lying by the side of the street."

"About a week later, I was walking through the parking lot by Save-on-Foods. I was going to get pizza from the dumpster behind Dominos Pizza. Abbott came up to me. He put on his black leather gloves, punched me in the face, and ribs, and kicked me in the leg. I don't want to file a complaint. It's his word against mine. Who are they going to believe."

"It's a matter of perception"

Our Voice vendors, Ed Mahar and Peter VanEck claim that on-going struggles with the police crossed the line into police brutality on three separate occasions recently. Mahar and Van Eck allege that Constables Grant Jongejan and Rick Abbott, Jasper Avenue beat cops, assaulted them in an attempt to keep them off Jasper Avenue.

The vendors, homeless since early summer, were living behind a church a block from Edmonton's main downtown street when the alleged incidents occurred. Subsisting on income from panhandling, dumpster diving and, more recently, the sales of Our Voice, their relationship with Abbott and Jongejan began badly and grew progressively worse over the summer.

"They confiscated the pail and squeegee I was using to wash windows. They confiscated my papers and badge. They told us to stay off Jasper," Mahar claims.

Constable Jongejan, while denying that the assaults took place, told Our Voice that beat cops regularly practice what he referred to as "pro-active policing". Known nuisance offenders are closely monitored for potential trouble. He stated that Mahar has a history of panhandling and public intoxication. He suggested that if there are concerns with the actions of himself and his partner, a complaint could be filed with the Edmonton City Police Complaints Department.

Mahar and VanEck expressed little confidence in this process, saying, "When you walk out the door, the form goes straight into the garbage." Sergeant Neil Dubord, supervisor of Jongejan and Abbott, offered to speak personally with the vendors about their complaints. He mistakenly told Our Voice that Constable Abbott was on vacation, and would not be available for comment. Further inquiries with EPS reception revealed that Abbott was at work as usual and had no vacation time booked until the end of October. He did not, however, return phone calls.

Sergeant Dubord, while admitting that he did not know the details of the incidents involving Mahar and Van Eck, suggested that there may be no objective truth. "Sometimes it's a matter of perception."

Natasha Laurence

If you've been a victim of police brutality or know someone who has, contact Our Voice at 423-2285 Ext. 162

The Anatomy of Force

Physical force can be a useful adjunct to proactive policing

Blows to the shoulders are recommended.

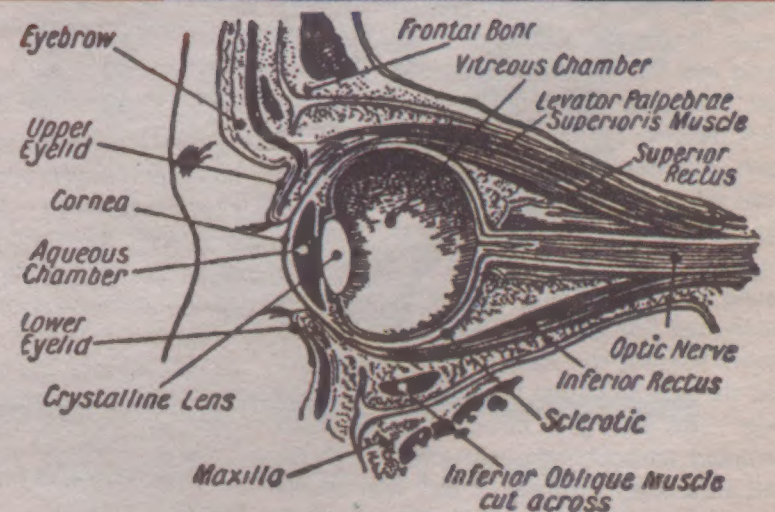
Caution should be used when administering blows to the head.

Photos: P. de Vos, Jr.



Facial blows often lead to the rupture of small vessels in the eyes

"It's a matter of perception"



One man's violence is another man's pleasure

Hold on to your shorts! The Games are coming

Next August, Edmonton will host the 2001 World Championships in Athletics. Billed as the world's third largest sporting event, more than 1800 athletes will participate. Organizers expect half a million spectators and anticipate a four billion person television audience.

The hype and drama began with the 1998 announcement that Edmonton would be hosting the track and field championships. Since then huge billboards have sprouted around the province featuring athletes straining in pursuit of medals. Organizers are betting that the lure of seeing the fastest man in the world or the woman who can jump the highest will be hard to resist. Enthusiasm is mounting.

Like a house-proud grandma, Edmonton is renovating and rebuilding, cleaning streets and primping vegetation, getting ready to welcome the world to our city. And like a fussbudget uncle, some city residents are fretting over how some parts of the city will look to the guests.

One area drawing attention is Whyte Avenue. Articles and opinion pieces have appeared in recent issues of The Edmonton Journal discussing the look of the avenue. Trash, the smell of urine, drunks and panhandlers have all been targeted as problems in the area.

One article focused on the influx of corporate culture to Whyte Avenue, which is forcing some business owners to leave the area. While nothing in the article addressed panhandling, an accompanying picture caption stated: [café owner] "Richard Horth says the area is changing - there are too many panhandlers and drunks and too much trash to make a living," drawing an undeserved parallel between panhandling and problems created because the avenue is a busy area.

Targeting panhandlers, homeless people and street vendors as problems has advocates at Our Voice worried. It appears as if the city, at the behest of a few citizens, may begin to lump panhandlers, drunks and trash into the same pile and try to sweep them off the street in time for the games.

Street Sweeps

In an American study investigating how cities address homelessness, fifty percent of the municipalities conducted "street sweeps." During major international sporting events, street sweeps have become a favoured tool for "beautifying" a city.

One of the most wide ranging and dramatic sweeps happened in Atlanta prior to the 1996 Olympic games.

Some residents were shocked that Atlanta bid for the games. "We couldn't understand why we would even go after the bid when we had the kind of poverty we did," Anita Beatty, executive director of the Atlanta Taskforce for the Homeless said. "Thirty percent [of] Atlanta lives below the poverty line."

In the two years before the games, Atlanta passed six heavily enforced anti-homeless ordinances making it illegal to panhandle, to loiter, to sleep in a park or to be in a parking lot if your car wasn't parked there. Beatty also stated the police had stacks of citations pre-printed with charges and "African-American male."

One homeless man said, "It seemed like there was a war going on between the police and anybody that did-

n't look like they could be of benefit to the image of the city of Atlanta."

After the Olympics, the anti-homeless laws were thrown out by higher courts. But by the time the games were over, nearly 10 000 homeless men had been arrested; many others had been bussed out of town; four shelters holding 300 beds had been demolished to build athletic arenas and 10 000 units of low income housing had been lost.

This summer's Olympics in Sydney are creating the same problems for homeless people. Last August a plan was proposed to create dossiers for the city's homeless.



Sydney Mayor, Frank Sartor stated: "We want to know what it will take to get these people off the streets. . . . We cannot afford to be a world city, with fantastic fireworks and the Olympics without also showing that we are dealing with our problem of homeless on the streets."

Housing

Homeless people are not the only victims of city cleanup schemes prior to "mega events." Also at risk are those living in low income housing, especially near event sites.

A study of Canadian cities hosting mega events found that planning for these events either ignored possible impacts on housing or were designed to "revitalize" low-income urban areas (by increasing middle class presence).

Expo '86 in Vancouver resulted in the removal of between 500 and 950 Downtown Eastside residents from their homes. Two suicides and a premature death are blamed on the evictions.

The world fair was held next to one of Vancouver's poorest neighbourhoods. Many residents of this area lived in housekeeping or hotel rooms. Their tenancy was governed by the Innkeepers Act that offered no protection for residents. This allowed an owner to evict a "hotel guest" regardless of the length of stay (up to 25 years in one case).

Before the games, community advocates lobbied the provincial government to freeze rents and make changes

to legislation governing rental hotel and housing rights. The government did not consider these evictions a serious problem and failed to act. They considered changes to this legislation to be unfair intervention in the marketplace. One politician went so far as to call the residents "greedy" for wanting to live in the area and advocated putting all the residents on busses to the Kootenays.

Calgary's 1988 Olympics created a housing crisis. The effects were felt in several areas including Victoria Park, a low income community near the Stampede grounds. While the area had some of Calgary's most affordable housing, large numbers of residents were pushed out of the area by expansionist pressure including the building of the Saddledome.

Across from another venue, Canada Olympic Park, residents of two apartment complexes were "encouraged" to move. The owner calculated that a \$1 million renovation investment in the building would yield a \$9 million return in profits from housing Olympic guests. "To encourage tenants to move, an employee dressed as Santa Claus ran around handing out \$1,000 checks ("vacation bonuses") to some of the tenants and they promised to rent the units to them once the Games were over."

In another apartment complex with a view of some events, tenants were forced to move. One evictee commented: "It seems like the same old thing that goes on with the Olympic sponsors . . . They get the first choice. They're taking my home away from me. . . . We weren't given a choice."

2001 World Championships in Athletics, Edmonton

The world track and field events will take place at the Commonwealth Stadium, which is situated in a low income area of the city. According to Councillor Jim Taylor, evictions of tenants and street sweeps are not on the city's agenda. Taylor pointed out that this will be a one-venue event, unlike the multi-venue Olympics. This means city guests are less likely to see "undesirable" parts of the city.

When questioned about the effect the World Championships will have on homelessness and housing, Taylor stated that he doesn't "see this moving people out of low rental housing."

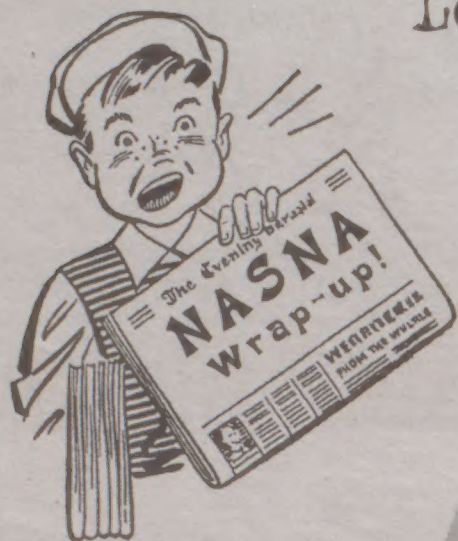
Even so, Calgary in 1988 only saw 180 000 visitors and ended up displacing hundreds of residents. Organizers of the 2001 games expect 250 000 visitors to Edmonton.

Rates at hotels hoping to attract visitors will increase sharply over the ten days of the event. The Commercial Hotel on Whyte Avenue room charges will nearly double from the \$35.84 for a single with bath to \$67 per night. The Beverly Crest, also located in a lower income area will increase its rates by nearly a third. The Sand Motor Hotel will more than double its current rate.

In the conclusion of the Canadian study, Dr. Kris Olds, the author, pointed out that the key to achieving "revitalization" and evictions relies on the minimization of both community participation and resistance. Cities' "infatuation with monumentality," destroyed communities. People interested in preserving communities they live in for when mega events are over, must be "extremely well organized."

Rebecca Lippiatt-Long

Leaving the old school of thought behind



In our society we've always carried with us this notion that benevolence will cure the ills of poverty and forgive the misery in which many people live. A cup of soup, some warm blankets and kind words were enough to send someone back to fend off the cold nights.

And as the giving nature of many people in our communities bears extreme importance to the survival of the poor there is reason to move beyond the idea of benevolence. Poor people are beginning to stand up and take control of their lives. They are starting to talk about the systems and attitudes at work which, rather than helping to end poverty, are actually contributing to poverty.

Poor people need dignity, they need incomes and they need control. In order for this to happen our society

needs equality and must truly value all people. Since the beginning of the 1990's street papers across North America have been talking about these ideas and have led the way in the movement toward empowerment and putting control back into the hands of the poor.

From July 20-23 Our Voice, Edmonton's very own street publication, hosted the North American Street Newspaper Association conference. Close to 100 people from more than 40 street-sold publications across North America visited Edmonton to talk about the fast growing movement of street papers and social activism working to end the poverty that exists in our communities. There were representatives from places like New York, San Francisco, Austin, Portland, Montreal, Halifax and many more.

At the conference a large focus was placed on the idea of breaking down the barriers that poor people face when dealing with so called help agencies and systems like government programs that are actually perpetuating their poverty. The idea of empowerment and allowing people the freedom to choose and act their way to a better quality of life resounded through much of the dialogue that took place.

There's an old saying, "you can't have rich people if you don't have poor people!" Street papers like Our Voice have been examining this statement for many years. We have tried, through the experiences of the people who sell these papers, to determine exactly why people are poor in a very wealthy part of the world. Street papers

have asked very critical and aggressive questions about poverty and why it continues to increase as each day passes. Street papers have been the voice of the poor; they have determined the only way to change the trends of worsening poverty is to allow poor people both the power to speak out and the power to change their own lives. Street papers enable this process, while promoting the attitude that any organization or individual wanting to help the poor, along with care and compassion, should act as a resource for empowerment.

"There is this layer of social workers and so called helping professionals that are given jobs and are being paid good salaries to tell us how we should be and act and how we should fix our lives. We know how to fix our lives, what we lack is the support and resources to do it. Poor people are very capable people who have been injured in some way and have been left behind. This doesn't mean we're retarded or lazy, it means we need opportunities to take advantage of, it means we need to be in charge of ourselves. Having someone else in charge of us at these basic levels steals our dignity and our worth," said one street paper vendor at the conference.

The Edmonton conference demonstrated that street papers around the world are united and that now is the dawn of a new type of fight against poverty. It is a fight that recognizes the poor as the leaders.

Michael Walters

EMPOWERING WHOM?

Pat Capponni, author of three books about poverty in Canada, the latest being "The War at Home," was the keynote speaker at the Annual North American Street Newspaper Conference in Edmonton, July 2000. She addressed one of the core issues of the conference and the street newspaper industry in general: how to integrate the vendors into meaningful roles in the management of street newspapers.

Her experience as a participant in business ventures in Toronto run by and for psychiatric survivors, (or as they prefer to call themselves, "crazy people"), provided the insight for her talk. Pat's experiences are with a more clearly defined group than those served by street newspapers, but both psychiatric survivors and street vendors fall into the ever increasing population in that ever widening dead zone between what the market place considers employable characteristics and what the ever shrinking public social services sector considers employable characteristics. Vendors are a more mixed bag than the group Pat has worked with. While there are indeed undiagnosed and untreated "crazy people" among the vendor population, there are also individuals who run the gamut of employment barriers from severe physical handicaps and developmental anomalies, all stages of the substance abuse cycle, including recovery, to mentally and physically fully functional adults who's only barrier to the market economy may be education, race, gender, age or a slightly idiosyncratic personality.

Ms. Capponni admitted that issues she addressed at the conference, from her personal history of experiences on both sides of the client/helper fence are similar but not completely congruent. For instance there is more public funding available for the benefit of the "worthy poor" in the psychiatric survivor category than for the "unworthy poor" in the more generalized vendor category, as well as more access to expert services. Some problems are similar though. Most after care mental health programs and street newspaper projects emerge from a

very paternalistic social agency background, where as Capponni pointed out "The client is the least important part of the agency." She cited that this is evidenced by the different level of attractiveness and comfort of accommodations in those areas of the agency where clients are allowed compared to those areas where the staff work and relax. This physical evidence and the accompanying attitude from support personnel, such as receptionists, clerical and volunteer personnel is never lost on those who are forced by whatever situation to access the resources of the agency, no-matter how charming the approach of the caseworker may be.

Capponni addressed directly the issue of client empowerment. She said that no one can give another individual power. The most helping groups and projects can do is learn to let the individuals they wish to "empower" take power when they are ready to ask for it. To do this, agencies and social workers will have to start talking to clients as equals, leaving their job titles and positions behind, learn to listen when clients finally summon up the courage to tell them things they may not wish to hear, learn to take orders from clients and "lead from behind". This is not an easy thing to do. The desire to directly control every aspect of his/her environment is an instinct directly hardwired into the human mind and reinforced by all of our society's social structures. Letting go of power and allowing individuals who, by their simple presence in a social program have been labeled as inadequate in some way, calls for a degree of hope, faith, trust and intuitive good judgment on the part of agency personnel, that most individuals in our society would have a hard time finding. It is not handed out with a social work degree or diploma.

The good news Pat brought us was that for those groups and agencies who can make this leap of faith, reject the marketplace evaluation of the competency and worth of their client group, take the risk that "crazies and incompetents" may indeed wreck the entire

project and lose staff wages and facility funding, the process can work. Seeing Pat's sister Diane Capponni's presentation at the CED Network Conference in Red Deer last year describing the A-WAY Courier business and the Crazy Spoon restaurant project in Toronto, to which Pat referred, inspired Edmonton vendors attending that conference to start asking more assertively for an active and effective voice in running Edmonton's Street Newspaper, Our Voice. The result of this agitating was the summoning of a focus group of participants, including readers, that defined areas in which Our Voice could improve its product and further ratified the formation of an Advisory Committee. This is not enough. As Pat said, "no one has to listen to an Advisory Committee", but it is a start. The vendors from Edmonton who attended the NASNA Conference hope the Our Voice Editorial staff, the Bissell Reps and all the other Editorial, Management, Vendor and Agency reps from across North America who attended this conference were also listening to Ms. Capponni.

Theresa McBryan

The 10,000 health care providers represented by the Health Association of Alberta support health care for people, not for-profit.

HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION
OF ALBERTA



Working to Keep Your
Health in Good Hands

10212-112 Street
Phone (780) 488-0168
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1M4
Toll Free 1-800-252-7904
Fax (780) 488-0534
Web site: www.hsaa-alberta.org



A Man Named Rodney

went to school."

An A student, he loved school. He preferred being at school to anywhere else, so one day he found a way to break into the school by taking off a window.

"I'd sneak in every night unnoticed," he said. "I lived there on and off for two years."

Rodney survived through a combination of panhandling and stealing junk food, mainly pop and hotdogs and the occasional hamburger patty.

"To this day, I don't like hotdogs," he said.

He had his panhandling down to a fine art. He would go to a bus stop, and ask for a quarter, saying he was short for fare. Then, he moved around the corner to the next bus stop, eventually going in a square to return to the first stop.

"I used to make \$20 bucks in an hour or two," he said. Most people were quite generous but once a lady spat on him when she saw what he was doing.

Rodney had been living in the school for six months when a priest, who worked with the school, found him sleeping in the nurse's office. After trying to convince Rodney to go to welfare, which Rodney

refused, the priest helped him out. He warned Rodney to watch out for the janitor, then brought him blankets and gave him a key to the bingo hall so he could get food from the freezer.

About ten months later, a nun, who taught English, also discovered Rodney. She was even kinder than the priest. She even gave him an allowance of \$5 a week and a key to the library.

While living at the school, Rodney kept up a pretense of going home every day. He then walked around until about 10 p.m., before sneaking back in.

Both the priest and the nun had warned him not to turn on any lights, so he spent his evenings in the library reading by the light of a street light outside the window. His favorite writer was John Steinbach.

After two years, Rodney's residence at the school was discovered and he was sent to another group home run by an elderly couple.

"If it weren't for them, I would have ended up on the street," he said. "They were very moral and ethical."

Rodney went on to study Journalism, and had a career as a smokejumper, being the first on the scene of forest fires. Now he lives in Winnipeg and writes for a dozen publications including Our Voice.

Linda Dumont

While most runaways leave home to drop out of school, Rodney Graham ran away to school.

Rodney's mother was an alcoholic and his parents divorced when he was nine. By the time he was 13, his mother had found a boyfriend and having a kid around was just too much trouble.

"There was really no room for me. My mother lied to family court and said I was unmanageable and made me a ward of the court."

As a ward of the court, Rodney was put into a group home, but said, "it scared the hell out of me". His first day at the home a girl jumped off the roof in a suicide attempt, and that night his roommate went to buy pot from a girl member. That was bad enough, but for Rodney, the final straw was the attitude towards school.

"You didn't even have to go to school," he said. "None of the kids

Shakespearean rendition of an Erse tripper docking in Edmonton and dropping in on the NASNA Conference hosted by Our Voice.

This tripper was a brick who hailed from our fair land of Kelt. By trade he was a scribe, therefore he felt he shalt trip abroad to seek the portals of scriptdom.

Upon docking in Canada, he ferried westward 'til he reached Edmonton. Thus arriving in this fair city, he decideth that he would brook Edmonton's bucolic ambience. While basking in familiar mileau, which harkeneth his mind to home, thus entailing him to set up digsin the inner city.

Tripping along the promenades, he accosted a chapman hawking street papers. After a "fare" exchange, he proceeded on his jocular way to peruse, digest, and be titillated by the street magazine entitled "Our Voice". After consuming the magazine, he made a notation of the North American Street Newspaper Association conference.

He staid his tripping to attend the conference. With the pearls of knowledge that he gained from this session, he said to himself "This will enhance the portals of my scribing." Thus gaining the insight of how a street magazine comes into being and existence, he started tripping back home savoring the pearls of scriptdom.

eGo.T.4

A proud supporter
of NASNA 2000

ANNA

Alberta Weekly
Newspaper Association

Edmonton's
REAL
Alternative

VUE
Weekly
EDMONTON'S URBAN VOICE

Available FREE at over 1,000 locations
every Thursday

Laser
screen printing

MERO
makers of fine sportswear

Manufacturing • Embroidery • Screen Printing

Ram Sharma

5615 - 94A Street
Edmonton, AB T6E 4Z1

Tel 468-6435
Fax 468-8425
Toll Free 1-800-468-6015

OUR VOICE

Tools for
Critical Thought

2 for 1 Pizza
Pot Luck Pizza
& Curry Express
Now under new management!

Free Delivery
Southside (over \$15)
Fully Licensed

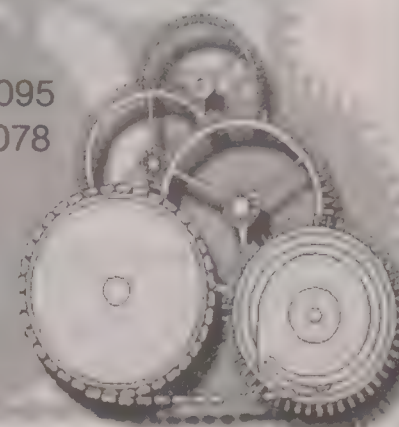
448-7373
414-1600

3005-66 St., Edmonton, AB

Jacobsen Hage Engineering

#202, 10459-178 St,
Edmonton, AB
T5H 1R5

Ph. 484-1095
Fax 484-1078



The Poetry of Patches



Concrete Jungle

In this concrete jungle
where angels fear to tread

I entered the school of
hard knocks with dread

Living on the street
taught me survival at
all cost

I've become a member
of the forgotten and
the lost.

The code of the con-
crete jungle is the only
justice

A society within a soci-
ety existing in this dis-
mal abyss

Cops are viewed as the
enemy, they can't be
trusted

Talking to them could very well get one dusted.

As I walk through this concrete jungle

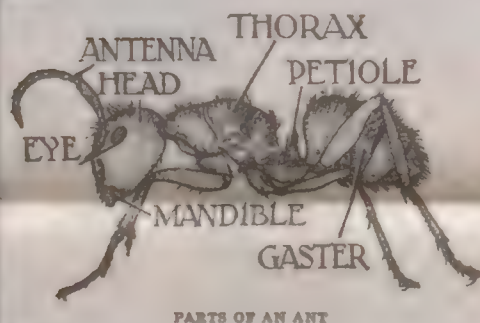
Who I was, who I am
now there's a struggle

Hiding behind a mask,
walking in fear

Tough exterior unable
to shed a tear.

Existing day by day in
this concrete jungle

Seeing without seeing,
hearing without hearing



Constantly watching my back, not trusting anyone

Walking alone in a crowd, of friends there's none.

In this concrete jungle wearily I plod along

In my lonely heart there plays a mournful song

Loneliness is a constant companion walking by my side

Alcohol and drugs mask pain as they take me for a ride.

Big Sisters & Big Brothers Society of Edmonton & Area



"Be a Volunteer Mentor.
It's Kid's Stuff!"



Ph. (780) 424-8181 www.bsbb.org

Calgary Metal (1985) Ltd.

3415 - Ogden Road SE,
Calgary, AB,
T2G 4N4

Tel: (403) 262-4542
Fax: (403) 262-1114

Contract Hauling
Liquid & Dry Bulk Tankers

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Liquid Chemical Dispatch . 417-7700
Lube / Oil Dispatch 449-1100
Administration 449-6688

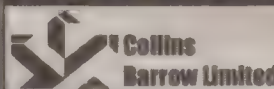
301 Streambank Avenue
Sherwood Park Alberta
T8H 1N1

Puzzling over what to do?

For a free consultation call Dave Turner, Trustee.
Yvonne Trynchuk or Melanie Leigh, Administrators.

The Debt Creditor Specialists

102, 12220 Stony Plain Road, Edmonton Ph. 414-1133
1400, 777 8th Ave. SW, Calgary Ph. 298-1579



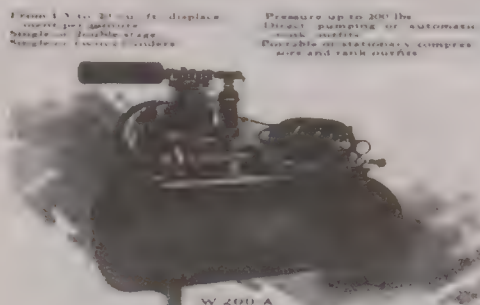
Trustee in Bankruptcy
After hours appointments available.

DACRO INDUSTRIES LTD.

9325-51 Ave.
Edmonton
T6E 4W8

Ph. (780) 434-8900
Fax (780) 433-3138

A Caring Part of Our Community!



Joe's

Engine & Compressor
Maintenance Inc.

468-3399
Fax: 462-3805
7427-67 St.
Edmonton, AB.

Parts & Service
Field & Shop
Overhauls
Compressor Valve Packing & Rebuilding



LPP
SERVICES LTD.
10331-97 St., Edmonton, AB

Colour Scan & Digital Reproduction
Wide Mouth Scan (42")

We do all reproduction services



423-5720



944-2815

"Encouraging all children
to value their education
and continue to work
hard for a better future!"

EMERGENCY CARE FOR CHILDREN
0 TO 10 YEARS WHOSE FAMILIES
ARE IN CRISIS SITUATIONS.

FOLLOW-UP COUNSELLOR AND
REFERRALS TO SUPPORT SERVICES

24 HOUR CRISIS CARE NURSERY

HITCH
WAREHOUSE

Bus: (403) 944-9209
Fax: (403) 486-4890

John Reil

17220 - 107 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5S 1E5
1-800-661-7557

The Journey is the Destination

Greg James has been on a journey. He started out with eyes averted, full of hope and blind faith. Now his eyes are wide open and he speaks about life with acceptance and understanding. The landscape he has travelled has taken him from a place he worked twenty years toward what he would call home, to a place where he is grateful for a warm night under the stars. He started in South Dakota, with a wife, a child and a job. He is now in Texas, with no family, no job and no home.

When Greg James was a truck driver, the homeless were the people who would bang on the door of his truck, "begging for handouts and asking for spot work." Like the truckers at a rest stop, the homeless were transient. Unlike the drivers, they did not belong. James would look out the window of his truck and think "I'm working," and he couldn't see why everyone else couldn't work too.

Now, Greg James knows that it's just not that easy to pigeonhole homeless people into categories of "unemployed" and "lazy." People who live on the street "exist beyond stereotypes." In James' experience, homeless people are waiting. Waiting for workers compensation settlements. Waiting to go back to school. Waiting to learn a new trade. Waiting to get on with their lives.

Driving a truck is physically hard. Injuries are slow to develop and hard to cure. After sixteen years of bouncing up and down in a truck, James became incapacitated by back pain. He was told he needed surgery. This was the first crossroad on his journey.

James chose not to have back surgery and instead opted for physical therapy. To prevent further injury, he was also attempting to get job retraining. The process of dealing with the employment system was difficult and frustrating. James needed assistance that he just was not getting.

Four months after he started the therapy, he reached another crossroad in his life. His fiancée was pregnant and James needed to take care of her. This need to do the right thing for his family is one of James's values – "values

are the core of what holds life together." He made the choice to support his family. James returned to what he knew – driving truck.

Although he was working again, James was afraid, knowing that the injury that put him out of work the first time was lurking just around the corner. Then, not long after the birth of his child, James' marriage fell apart, and with it, the threads of his life he had been trying so hard to hold together.

James was now faced with even more choices. He wanted to work, but not the work that damaged his body. "Driving ain't gonna happen again." But after sixteen years of driving truck, there was no other experience he was familiar with. Not being able to stand or sit for extended periods knocked out about eighty percent of the job market. The other twenty percent wouldn't pay enough to cover living expenses.

Because of James' decision to return to work, James no longer met the eligibility requirements for job retraining assistance. Now, he was standing at another crossroads with a clear view of the future. "I was so aware of what was going to happen, what did happen, I wanted to acquaint myself with it so it wouldn't be so hard." James travelled around the southern states for a while before opting to stay in Austin, Texas. "Hopefully I would find a dry spot to sleep and some food and some way to get by until suitable work could develop."

It's been over two years since James started living on the streets of Austin. He started going to the library and taught himself about computers. He now works as a compensated volunteer at the Texas Homeless Network. What he gets paid isn't enough to pay for a place to live. Fifty to eighty percent of what

he makes would have to go to rent. "I would rather feed myself than pay someone else's mortgage."

James has come a long way on his journey. "Back then I was trying to hold onto everything I had worked towards. It was extremely painful to realize it was going to become dust." The enduring lesson of his trip is a deep sense of gratitude. "I have learned to become grateful for everything."

Rebecca Lippiat-Long



Greg James (left) receiving an award for the best new Street Paper in North America (NASNA 2000)



Our Voice and the North American Street Newspaper Association would like to thank the following supporters of the NASNA 2000 Conference hosted here in Edmonton.

VENDOR SPONSORS

Marie Gordon – Barrister and Solicitor
McBean Becker
St. Paul's United Church
Faith Brace
Daphne Read
Jerry Krepakevich
Good Earth Clothing

Marilyn McClung
West End Community Outreach Project
Keith Turnbull
Jeanette Engblom
Liz Cooper
David Cooper
Dave Thiele – City Councillor
Edmonton Social Planning Council
Joan Welch
Wanda Dennelly
Communicating Power
Chris Bullock
Lois Hole
Michael Phair – City Councillor
Raj Pannu – MLA
Brian Mason – MLA
English Dept – University of Alberta
Paula MacLean
Birkett Tricoll Peterson

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

CJSR FM 88
Vue Weekly
Edmonton Sun
Food Not Bombs
Ecocity
Edmonton Folk Music Festival
Earth's General Store
Millwoods Town Centre
Second Cup – University
University of Alberta Students Union
TreeStone Bakery
Radical Cheerleaders
Laser Screen Printing (ad)
Associated Translators Group – Rene Ladsous

CHECK OUT ov online:
www.bissellcentre.org/ourvoice

Inner City Celebrates the 20th Anniversary of The Boyle McCauley Health Centre

It was a celebration of a lifetime as The Boyle McCauley Health Centre hosted its 20th year anniversary on Saturday July 8th at the Boyle McCauley Community Hall. Crowds of people mostly from the inner city came to celebrate and commend The Boyle McCauley Health Centre's 20 years of diverse medical services offered to its residents of the Boyle McCauley communities.

The celebration officially opened with a native prayer conducted by Native Elder Jimmy Whitefish.

Periodically throughout the celebration, talented performers consisting of 5 male native drummers, a 5 piece mixed Celtic folk band, a jigging female Celtic duo, young Native hoop dancers and Native female fancy dressers all provided interesting entertainment for people of the inner city.

Several people gave speeches on a stage situated inside The Boyle McCauley Community Hall skating rink.

The speakers commended the extraordinary multi-medical centre for its 20 years of loyalty and efficiency in offering medical services to people in the inner city.

Community activists who spoke included N.D Provincial Leader Raj Pannu, City Councilor Michael Phair.

The Boyle McCauley Health Centre was built in 1980. The old building was formerly located at 10604 - 96 Street, one block south of where the current Boyle McCauley Health Centre stands.

It was originally transformed from a small clinic, occupying 1 doctor, 1 nurse practitioner and 1 front end staff who also acted as a lab technician. It grew into a two story multi-medical centre offering an array of services that include a Dental Clinic, Women's Health Clinic, Foot Clinic, Native Healing Circles and other programs.

The Boyle McCauley Health Centre is a non-profit organization. The Centre receives 85 percent of its funding from Capital Health and 15% of its additional funding from charitable organizations.

The highlight of the evening was the awarding of Appreciation Certificates. They were awarded to 16 employees and volunteers of the Boyle McCauley Health Centre for their contributions and commitments.

"We need to show a dedication for the public resources in the eradication of poverty. There is no excuse to have hungry people on the streets and cities of Alberta. We should learn from the examples of the Boyle McCauley Health Centre. All we need is the political will to succeed," said Raj Pannu, while praising the Centre.

Michael Phair also had kind words for the Centre.

"The two aspects I think the city really appreciates and admires about them is one; through the twenty years that they've been in existence, they'd worked hard to form

partnerships with other groups and organizations and community people to assist in a variety of things, that have made the total community better. Secondly, they stayed around and managed to do the work that needed to be done and never say never."

Sharon Thurston Executive Director The Boyle McCauley Health Centre cheerfully celebrated the occasion.

"I think this community has created a wonderful Health Centre. Some of the staff have been here from the beginning. We've got new staff here because they've chosen to make a contribution to the community. I think the board and staff look forward to another 20 great years."

John Zapantis



STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES OF EDMONTON

A FREE Service provided by U of A Law Students

Services include:

Assistance in Provincial Court and before tribunals with regard to:

- Debt/Collection Agencies
- Landlord and Tenant disputes
- Student Finance Appeals
- Student Appeals
- Social Service Appeals
- Employment/Wrongful Dismissal
- Do Your Own Divorce Clinics
- Summary Conviction Criminal Offences
- Driving Offences
- Speak to Sentence
- Trials

And More!

Located on U of A Campus at Emily Murphy House
Call 492-2226
For More Information



A Free Service Provided by U of A Law Students*

*Income Guidelines in Effect

PH: (780) 454-0884
FAX: (780) 413-9449
EMAIL: laveng@msn.com



LAVIOLETTE ENGINEERING LTD.
Consulting Engineers

10973 - 138 Street
Edmonton, AB, T5M 1P3

LOU HOWELL BOBCAT

3208 - 104 Ave.
Edmonton, AB.
T5W-0A9

Ph: 474-0010
Fax: 474-3907



BUSINESS LISTINGS

Panama Enterprises (1990) Inc
11217-154 St, Edmonton, AB
T5M 1X8, Ph. 452-5727

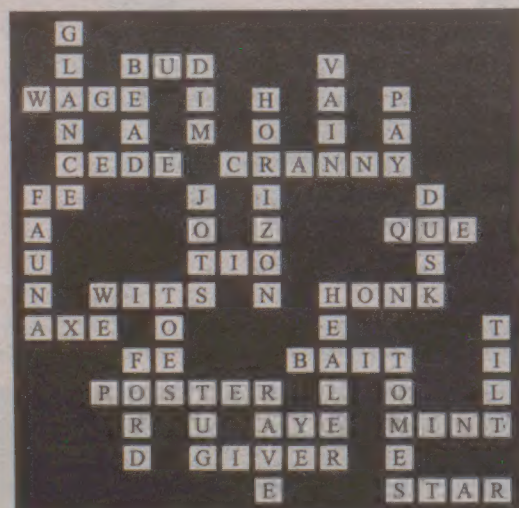
Cheryl Anne Lieberman Typographics
#315, 10113-104 St, Edmonton,
T5J 1A1, Ph. 428-0830

Continental Inn
16625 Stony Pl. Rd., Edmonton AB
T5P 4A8, Ph. 484-7751

JA Matheson Equities,
11914-129 Ave, Edmonton,
T5E 0N3, Ph. 455-6688

Mayo Industrial & Auto Sales
10538-115 St, Edmonton, AB
T5H 3K6, Ph. 426-2870

SOLUTIONS TO AUGUST CROSSWORD



ALCO
MACHINE WORKS INC.

435-3502

FAX: 436-1858
1-800-563-1498

6925-104 St N.W.
Edmonton, AB

Machine shop services
Fabrication & Welding
Heavy Duty Mechanical
Drivetrain Products
Equipment Manufacturing & Repair
Portable Welding Machine
Dynamic Balancing
Crane Remanufacturing, Repair & Certification
Oilfield Handling Equipment
24 Hour Emergency Service

ALBERTA CREDIT COUNSELLORS LTD.

Est. 1995

Ph. (780) 488-3328

602, 10216-124 St
Edmonton, AB





NIGHTHAWK Manufacturing Inc. "Your one stop cushion shop"

Electronic Heat Sealing ♦ Quality Wheelchair
Upholstery Cushions and Accessories

1911-91 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T6P 1W2

(780)464-2856
Fax (780)464-6247
1 800 661-6247



DOLAR DRUG MART #2

13211-132 Street
Edmonton, AB
T5L 1R9

Ph. (780) 455-0555

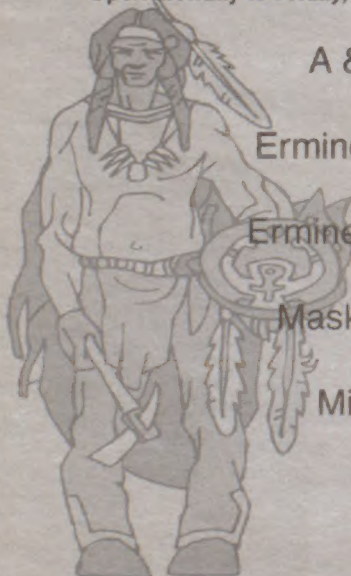
ELIZABETH LANG

Insurance Consultants
(1987) Ltd.

#3550, 10180-101 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 3S4
Ph: 421-1777

Ermineskin Tribal Enterprises

Box 219, Hobbema, Alberta, T0C 1N0, Ph: 420-0008
Open Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM



A & M Stationary
585-2434
Ermineskin Blankets
585-2600
Ermineskin Cafeteria
585-2495
Maskwachees Mall
585-2600
Miywasin Coffee
585-0040
Rope 'n Rider
585-2011



**THERESA
MCBRYAN**

I studied Graphic Design in college. We learned some manual and problem solving skills, but by far the most emphasis was placed on generating creative ideas. During college and during the long, futile, post grad job search, my self-esteem, my self-confidence and my creativity were crushed. I have since found that it is a lot easier to "think outside of the box" if you are not living in the box.

The most valuable thing that has happened to me since selling OUR VOICE is the re-ignition of my creativity. I definitely see things differently now. This kind of renewal is important to artists. Writing for OUR VOICE allows me to express this vision.

A young man on the OUR VOICE staff paid me a wonderful compliment recently. He said, "I always knew you were a dangerous woman, until I talked to you I had no idea how dangerous." I enjoy being out there on the street corner encouraging other "dangerous" women (and men and young people too), to learn to "think outside the box". Let's give a big cheer for street corner activism.

**VENDOR
OF THE
MONTH**

EVERY
Authorized vendor
has a **BADGE!**

OUR VOICE



**V
E
N
D
O
R
B
A
D
G
E**

Vendor Name _____
Number _____
Authorized by _____

OUR VOICE VENDOR'S CODE

- I will be sober at all times while working.
- I will be polite to all members of the public.
- I will vend only in areas that are authorized.

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

Cec Garfin



BETTY TAYLOR

"One more step and one more step. You can always take just one more step toward your personal goals, no matter what they may be, or how minor they are, it still becomes your own personal success."

Betty Taylor is living proof of her life philosophy.

A single mother of 2 and grandmother of 3, Betty came to Edmonton from Ontario as a teenager. She had her own business on Whyte Avenue, and now operates from her home, selling crafts and conducting craft classes. She also sells her wares at flea markets in St. Albert, Sherwood Park and Callingwood in Edmonton.

Her volunteer work includes teaching crafts at the Grey Nuns Hospital and Westview Village, advising small business startups at the Community Loan Fund office, as well as privately assisting individuals in starting their own small businesses.

Betty, you are deserving of this recognition,

and we hope you continue to keep up with all your worthwhile endeavors.

Every month in Our Voice, we will be featuring someone who has gone the extra kilometre in their lives or in their careers to make a difference in the lives of those who are less fortunate. The Citizen of the Month will receive a dinner for two courtesy of the Garneau Cafe Mosaics on Whyte Avenue.

Cafe Mosaics



**Our Voice
Magazine and Café
Mosaics'**
Citizen of the Month

Rising Sun Café and Sober Dance

11311 - Kingsway Avenue

Tues - Coffee Night
Wed & Thurs - Karaoke
Fri - Adult dance
Sat - Youth & Family Dance

Open till 4 am on
Friday & Saturday



PARALYMPIC SPORTS ASSOCIATION



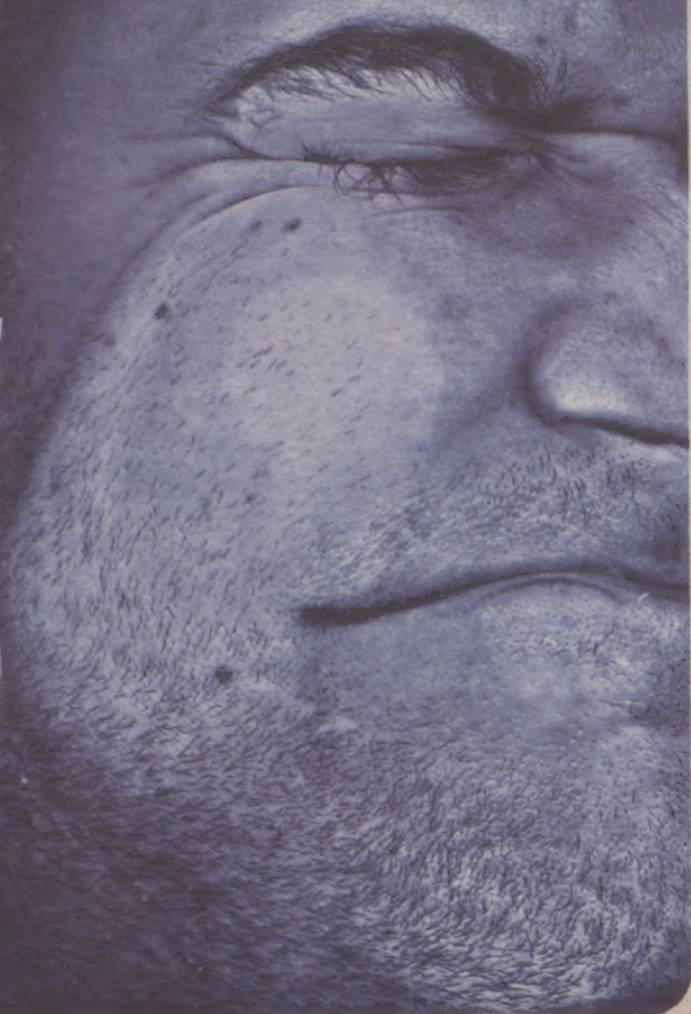
PSA is a non-profit organization which provides recreation and sport opportunities for persons of all ages with a physical disability. Fall programs begin in October and include sledge hockey, adapted swimming, floor hockey, wheelchair square dancing and canasta. Call for registration information.

10024-79 Ave,
Edmonton, AB,
T6E 1R5

(780) 439-8687
Fax: 432-0486
www.parasport.net

Don't Flinch!

It's the Happy Page



Across

- 3. Unused
- 5. Motley
- 7. Conifer
- 9. Frog's skin
- 11. Stream
- 13. Barroom fight
- 15. What? (Fr.)
- 17. Major continent
- 20. Skiing place
- 23. Xmas decoration
- 26. Oodles
- 27. Plow beast
- 28. Author Zane
- 29. Light scent
- 30. Leg bone

Down

- 2. Sonny's ex
- 3. Require
- 4. Strong breeze
- 6. Spit
- 7. Unwanted fat
- 9. Male cat
- 10. Compliance
- 12. Blush
- 14. One up the sleeve
- 16. Lab rat dilemma
- 18. Beams
- 19. Sexy Saint
- 21. Type of fountain
- 22. Collector of yore
- 24. Tour of duty
- 25. Exists
- 26. Mission of the SS



Minnow



LAUGH. It sure beats
CRYING.

Soupline Boh

I HEAR YOU'RE GOING WITH KATHY.

YUP. I'M MEETING HER... AFTER DARK

Linda Dumont

WHAT DO YOU SEE IN HER? SHE'S A HAG.

SHE'S GOT THE BEER MONEY.

HERE SHE COMES NOW

OH NO! IT'S NOT DARK YET.

YOU'RE EARLY

I COULDN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU

